

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his telephone discussion with the undersigned regarding this application on April 27, 2004, and hereby submit this Amendment After Final accordingly.

As discussed in the telephone conversation, the initialed PTO-1449 was not received by the Applicants for references shipped in Box 1 of the First Supplemental IDS, filed 7/16/03. Therefore, in accordance with the Examiner's recommendation, we re-submit copies of the IDS and Form PTO-1449 originally filed on 7/16/03 and received by the PTO on 7/22/03, as indicated by the return receipt postcard, a copy of which is enclosed herein. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial and return this Form PTO-1449.

The Office action dated February 5, 2004, examined claims 1-21. The Office action rejected claims 1, 9-11, and 19, and objected to claims 2-8, 12-18, 20, and 21.

Without acquiescing to the arguments for rejection set forth in the Office action, Applicants hereby cancel without prejudice claims 1 and 11, and amend claims 2, 9, 10, and 12. Thus, claims 2-10 and 12-21 are pending in this application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of cancelled claims 1 and 11 in one or more continuation and/or continuation-in-part applications.

The Office action at page 4, item 4, states, "Claims 2-8, 12-18, 20, and 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."

The pending claims include two independent claims, namely claims 2 and 12. In an effort to put the claims in condition for allowance, Applicants amend claim 2 so as to include the limitations of independent parent claim 1. In addition, Applicants amend claim 12 so as to include the limitations of independent parent claim 11. Claims 3-8, 13-18, 20, and 21 depend directly or indirectly from either claim 2 or claim 12, and include all the limitations of the respective base claim.

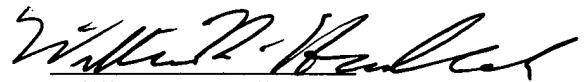
Furthermore, Applicants amend dependent claims 9, 10, and 19 so that they no longer depend from claims 1 and 11, but instead depend from claims 2 and 12. Thus, each of dependent claims 9, 10, and 19 includes all of the limitations of its respective parent claim. Applicants respectfully submit that since claims 2 and 12 are allowable as rewritten in independent form, claims 9, 10, and 19 are allowable as well.

Applicants respectfully request that the objections to claims 2-8, 12-18, 20, and 21 be withdrawn, that the rejections of claims 9, 10, and 19 be withdrawn, and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

If the Examiner believes that it would be useful to discuss any aspect of the application by telephone, the undersigned representative invites the Examiner to call at the telephone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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